

Message Text

PAGE 01 GABORO 02353 261802Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-08 IGA-02 COME-00 TRSE-00
DOTE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 DODE-00 IO-13
SP-02 SS-15 /066 W

-----031112 261812Z /46

P R 261305Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0745
INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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DEPARTMENT PASS AID/W

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID ELTN LT
SUBJECT: LESOTHO ROAD PROJECT

REF: MASERU 1480

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A LETTER DATED SEPTEMBER 23 TO ME FROM PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN. AS NOTED IN THE OPENING PARAGRAPH, IT FOLLOWS UP OUR BRIEF CONVERSATION REPORTED REFTEL. IT REAFFIRMS (A) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LESOTHO ROAD PROJECT INCLUDING TRANSCENDENT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES; AND(B) GOL INTENTION TO PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING "A SECTION" OF THE ROAD IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A CONSTRUCTION CAPABILITY. LETTER ALSO EXPRESSES "DEEP SATISFACTION" RE US ROLE IN SOUTHER AFRICA AND COMMENTS SPECIFICALLY ON SECRETARY VANCE'S JULY 1 SPEECH TO NAACP. A BRIEF REPLY TO JONATHAN IS APPENDED BELOW WHICH I PROPOSED TO SEND UNLESS DEPARTMENT PERCEIVES OBJECTION BY SEPTEMBER 29. IF DEPARTMENT OR AID HAS COMMENTS TO ADD TO THE LETTER, THEY SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY COB SEPTEMBER 28. END SUMMARY.

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2. TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN'S SEPTEMBER 23 LETTER:

QUOTE MY DEAR AMBASSADOR,

I AM TAKING UP THIS OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW UP THE BRIEF DISCUSSION WHICH I HAD WITH YOU ON WEDNESDAY EVENING REGARDING THE MOHALE'S HOEK-QACHA'S NEK ROAD PROJECT WHICH YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS KINDLY AGREED TO CONSIDER FOR FINANCING.

I SHOULD, FIRST OF ALL, LIKE TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE TO YOU FOR YOUR KEEN INTEREST IN THE PROJECT

AND FOR YOUR SYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE TO THE PLIGHT OF THOSE WHO ARE LARGELY ISOLATED AND STAND TO BENEFIT FROM THE SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THIS PROJECT. I AM REFERRING TO THE PEOPLE OF QUTHING AND QACHA'S NEK DISTRICTS.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMMUNICATION IS TO CONFIRM WHAT I SAID TO YOU ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE WHICH I ATTACH TO THE PROJECT. I SHOULD ONCE MORE LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT APART FROM PROVIDING A LIFE-LINE TO THE PEOPLE LIVING IN THE AREAS MENTIONED IT WILL HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES ON THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY. THE AREAS WHICH WILL BE SERVED BY THIS ROAD SYSTEM ARE NOT ONLY INACCESSIBLE BUT ARE EQUALLY ISOLATED UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS. THE ROAD WILL OPEN UP THE INTERIOR OF THE COUNTRY TO COMMERCIAL INTERCOUSE WITH THE LOW-LYING AREAS, BRING BADLY NEEDED SUPPLIES AND OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES. IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THIS PROJECT RETAIN THE FARAH EMERGENCY CLASSIFICATION.

YOUR EXCELLENCY WILL BE AWARE THAT BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUS LIGHT IN WHICH THIS PROJECT IS VIEWED, THE LESOTHO GOVERNMENT SET ASIDE A SUM OF R300,000 TOWARDS THE SPOT IMPROVEMENTS EVEN THOUGH THIS MEANT STRETCHING ITS LIMITED RESOURCES. THE SPOT IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED WITH E.E.C. ASSISTANCE ARE EXPECTED TO BE TEMPORARY. IF THE INTERESTS OF THESE DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES ARE TO BE SERVED, A PROPERLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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DESIGNED ALL-WEATHER STANDARD ROAD IS NECESSARY. THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE COUNTRY IS SUCH THAT ONLY A VERY WELL DESIGNED PROPERLY CONSTRUCTED ROAD CAN STAND THE STRAINS OF HEAVY DOWNPOURS AND HEAVY DUTY TRAFFIC. PLANS ARE ALREADY AFOOT TO SET UP A FREIGHT SYSTEM TO FACILITATE THE TRANSPORT OF SUPPLIES BETWEEN QACHA'S NEK, QUTHING AND THE LOWLANDS.

IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT AT THE OUTSET THAT WE ARE AWARE THAT THE ROAD WILL MEAN CONTINUED MAINTENANCE COSTS. MY GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY MAKING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THAT ITEM. WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT OUR OWN RESOURCES ALONE MAY NOT BE ADEQUATE TO MAINTAIN THE ROAD ADEQUATELY. FOR THAT REASON WE WILL NEED ASSISTANCE. ANOTHER VIEW OF THIS PROJECT IS THAT IT WILL PROVIDE VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO OUR PEOPLE IN MANY RESPECTS. FOR THIS REASON THE GOVERNMENT, THROUGH ITS MINISTRY OF WORKS, WILL WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BUILDING OF A SECTION OF THE ROAD. IT WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE COUNTRY TO DEVELOP ITS CAPABILITY IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME GIVING OUR PEOPLE THE BENEFIT OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UNITED STATES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ENGAGED ON THE PROJECT. GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING ITS CONSTRUCTION CAPABILITY BY TRAINING MORE BASOTHO AND SEEKING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. IN SPITE OF ALL THESE DIFFICULTIES, GOVERNMENT IS CLEARLY AWARE OF ITS CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES ONCE THE ROAD PROJECT HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, I HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY YOUR

APPRECIATION OF THE EMERGENCY NATURE OF THIS PROJECT. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I WRITE TO YOU TO REQUEST YOU TO URGE YOUR GOVERNMENT TO ADVANCE THE EARLY COMPLETION OF THE ROAD - AT THE LATEST BY 1980.

MY GOVERNMENT HAS NOTED WITH DEEP SATISFACTION THE VERY POSTIVE ROLE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PLAYING IN THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. I TOOK NOTE OF THE STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, MR. VANCE, TO THE NAACP IN PARTICULAR THE REFLECTION IN THE STATEMENT THAT THE POLICIES PURSUED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA ARE THE MAIN CAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT FACE SOUTHERN AFRICA. I HAVE ALSO TAKEN NOTE OF THE WARNING TO THE SMITH REGIME CONTAINED IN THE UK/USA SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS AND I SHOULD LIKE TO ASSURE YOU THAT MOTLOTLEHI'S GOVERNMENT REGARDS THOSE PROPOSALS AS A FAIR BASIS FOR RESOLVING THE RHODESIAN QUESTION.

I SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR KEEPING ME INFORMED ABOUT THE INITIATIVES OF THE FIVE WESTERN POWERS ON THE ISSUE OF NAMIBIA. IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE THAT THE EFFORTS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT WILL COME TO FRUITION AND THAT SENSE AND RATIONALITY WILL FINALLY COME TO THOSE IN CONTROL IN SOUTH AFRICA. AS YOU KNOW MY CONCERN IS NOT ONLY THE BASIC RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, BUT ALSO THE DIRECT INTERESTS OF MY COUNTRY WHICH ARE THREATENED BY THE CONTINUATION OF APARTHEID.

WITH HIGHEST REGARDS,
YOURS SINCERELY,

(SIGNED) LEABUA JONATHAN
PRIME MINISTER UNQUOTE

3. TEXT OF PROPOSED REPLY TO PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN:
QUOTE DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER:

I HASTEN TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 23 IN WHICH YOU AFFIRM IN UNMISTAKABLE TERMS THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF LESOTHO TO THE PROPOSED ROAD PROJECT BETWEEN MOHALE'S HOEK AND QACHA'S NEK. A REFLECTION OF YOUR WORDS AND THE HIGH PRIORITY ACCORDED THIS PROJECT CAN ALREADY BE SEEN IN THE ATTITUDE AND ACTIONS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT AND ESPECIALLY THE MINISTRY OF WORKS WHICH WILL BEAR A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARRYING IT OUT.

PERMIT ME TO ADD ON A PERSONAL BASIS AN
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EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION FOR YOUR OBSERVATIONS ON U.S.

POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA CONTAINED IN YOUR LETTER.
I HAVE TRANSMITTED THESE OBSERVATIONS TO MY AUTHORITIES
AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THESE
MATTERS FURTHER WITH YOU IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

WITH HIGHEST PERSONAL REGARDS. UNQUOTE

4. COMMENT: THE PM'S LETTER (PARA 2, ABOVE) IS
HEARTENING EVIDENCE GO GOL NATIONAL RESOLVE TO ACT IN SUPPORT
OF ITS NATIONAL PRIORITIES. WE SHOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE
TO ENCOURAGE AND STRENGTHEN THIS RESOLVE WHICH IS RIGHTLY A
KEY OBJECTIVE OF OUR ASSISTANCE.
NORLAND

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, HIGHWAYS
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Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1099740
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LESOTHO ROAD PROJECT
TAGS: EAID, ELTN, LT, (JONATHAN, LEABUA)
To: STATE INFO MBABANE MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ab5aaa3a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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